

ABSTRACT

DISSERTATION: THE RELATIONSHIP OF PRESCHOOL VARIABLES TO
KINDERGARTEN READINESS

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The purpose of this study was to discover the readiness levels for a cohort of students entering kindergarten for the first time and find the factors that influence school readiness by using a valid and reliable readiness assessment tool to impact policy. The readiness levels were the dependent variables in the study. The independent variables were the factors that potentially impact the children's readiness such as: gender, ethnicity, socio-economic levels, and prekindergarten experience. A three-week summer readiness intervention created the opportunity to randomly match the attendees to non-participants to study effectiveness of the program. Quantitative data analysis discovered significant differences in school readiness for children in this sample among groups when comparing the independent variables of gender, prekindergarten attendance, socio-economic levels, and a three-week summer intervention. The readiness differences occurred in almost every domain and for overall readiness. Prekindergarten experience did raise readiness levels. Females in the sample entered schools significantly more skilled than males. Both, the children from paid and reduced text program exhibited higher levels of the essential skills upon entering school than the children receiving free texts. A summer

three-week readiness intervention raised readiness skills significantly in overall readiness; Approaches to Learning; Cognitive, General Knowledge; Language Development; Early Literacy; and Social, Emotional domains. One implication from the results was that even a three-week readiness program had an impact; therefore interventions can make a difference in preparing children for school. However, as found in prior research socioeconomic level is highly correlated to school readiness.